

Message Text

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12

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MC-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

EB-07 ACDA-07 DHA-02 IGA-02 /077 W

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R 101752Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1100

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 4281

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: SALE OF M-16S TO NICARAGUA

REF: (A) MANAGUA 3985 AND (B) MANAGUA 4280

1. DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1976, REPORTED IN REFTTEL (B), HE ASKED WHETHER THE DEPARTMENT'S APPROVAL OF M-16S COULD STILL BE EXPECTED AFTER THE U.S. ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER. I REPLIED THAT IS WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT FORMAL APPROVAL LIKELY WOULD BE FORTHCOMING FOR AT LEAST PART OF THE ARMS REQUESTED SOMETIME AFTER THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS. HE ASKED TO BE KEPT CLOSELY INFORMED OF ANY DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING M-16S AND THE OTHER ARMS REQUESTS. I ASSURED HIM THAT I WOULD.

2. SOMOZA RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE M-16S IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR DISCUSSION OF U.S. DECISION TO TERMINATE MILGPS OVER NEXT YEAR. HE SEEMED TO BE SEEKING REASSURANCE THAT OUR COMMITMENT TO SELL ARMS TO THE GON HAD NOT WAVERED, AND STILL COULD BE RELIED UPON. AS ANTICIPATED, THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF MILGP TERMINATIONS, (WHICH INCIDENTALLY, WAS REPORTED IN LOCAL PRESS RECENTLY) HAS CREATED UNCERTAINTIES CONCERNING THE FUTURE SHAPE OF U.S.-NICARAGUAN MILITARY TIES. IT HAS REVIVED ANXIETIES ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF U.S. POLICY AND THE RELIABILITY OF U.S. COMMITMENTS.

3. WITHIN THIS GENERAL CONTEXT, A REFUSAL (OR PROLONGED DELAY
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THAT WOULD BE INTERPRETED AS TANTAMOUNT TO A REFUSAL) TO APPROVE

ARMS SALES TO GON AFTER NOVEMBER TAKES ON ADDED SIGNIFICANCE AND
RISKS SERIOUS DAMAGE TO OUR RELATIONS AND INTERESTS.
THEBERGE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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